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NEWS
from the
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Office of Information,
Publications and Reports
Washington, D.C.
20210

WEEK OF OCTOBER 27, 1975

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The Local Angle:

REGIONAL INFORMATION OFFICES

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Week of October 27, 1975

BLACK RETIRED AIR FORCE MAJOR
HELPS ADMINISTER UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

WASHINGTON -- A black man who has the military demeanor of a commanding officer is a top staff member of a federal and state program that provides cash benefits to millions of Americans each year who are involuntarily thrown out of work.

He is James E. Radford, a retired Air Force Major and native of St. Louis, Mo., who is executive assistant to Lawrence E. Weatherford, associate manpower administrator for unemployment insurance at the U.S. Department of Labor.

A man of obvious precision and directiveness, Radford, age 52, serves as "alter ego" for Weatherford. "In general", he says, "I tie together all the duties of the federal-state unemployment insurance service."

Conservative in dress yet impressive in presence, Radford explains that "the Unemployment Insurance Service provides leadership and policy guidance to state Employment Security agencies for the development, improvement, and operation of the Federal-State unemployment insurance program and related wage-loss income maintenance programs."

The medium-built government executive says that, "in fact, 90 percent of my business is dealing with the States on their individual unemployment insurance problems."

The first black to hold such a position at the Federal level, Radford's other duties include working with Congress to improve current and future unemployment insurance legislation, responding to congressional and statistical correspondence, and coordinating information on unemployment insurance within the Labor Department and with executive staff members in other federal agencies.

A graduate of St. Louis University, Radford has been with the Department since 1969, starting in the Kansas City regional headquarters and coming to the national office in Washington, D.C., as a manpower development specialist.

Prior to joining the Labor Department, Radford was manpower specialist for the mayor of St. Louis, Mo. This was after 20 years of military service in which his last position before retiring was executive assistant to a military base commander.

(MORE)

Radford is constantly in the recruiting business--not for the military but for the Labor Department. He's helping recruit qualified blacks and minority group members for administrative and specialized positions in the federal-state unemployment insurance system.

"Unfortunately," Radford notes, "there are not many blacks who have served in the unemployment insurance service and our goal is not only to increase blacks entering the service but also to provide opportunity for advancement." He says that it is not because of the so-called lack of initiative on the part of blacks, nor overt racism by whites. Instead, it is the "nature of the system", he stresses.

Radford adds that "the image of black people must be improved and one means of doing this is by black professional staffing."

# # #

Week of October 27, 1975

BLACK UNEMPLOYMENT RATE UNCHANGED
IN THIRD QUARTER OF 1975

WASHINGTON -- At 13.8 percent, there was virtually no change in the unemployment rate for black workers in the third quarter 1975, whereas the unemployment rate for whites declined from 8.2 to 7.7 percent, the U.S. Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported.

The white decline occurred primarily among adult women.

Blacks, though comprising 11.4 percent of the Nation's labor force, account for 18.8 percent of the unemployed and 28.0 percent of the discouraged workers. The ratio of their jobless rate to the white rate also underscores this disproportionality -- 1.8 to 1.

The unemployment rate for black veterans (20-34 years) was 13.8 percent (not seasonally adjusted) in the third quarter, compared with 7.8 percent for white veterans.

Highlights of the Nation's employment situation in the third quarter of 1975, as reported in Labor Force Developments: Third Quarter 1975, were as follows:

-- Employment rose by 1 million from the second quarter, unemployment declined by 400,000, and the unemployment rate dropped to 8.4 percent from the peak of 8.9 percent registered in the second quarter.

-- Unemployment was down for all three of the major demographic groups, but the improvement was most prononunced for adult women.

-- The unemployment rate for male family heads declined, but that for female family heads held about steady.

-- The average (mean) duration of joblessness climbed nearly 2 weeks to 15.8 weeks, largely because many of the long-term unemployed remained unable to find jobs.

-- The number of discouraged workers remained unchanged at the second quarter peak level of 1,150,000.

-- The unemployment rate for Vietnam-era veterans 20-34 years of age was little changed in the third quarter of 1975. However, at 9.2 percent, it was well above the year-earlier rate of 5.1 percent.

(MORE)

-- Unemployment among residents of poverty areas, at 10.4 percent, continued to be much higher than that among residents of nonpoverty areas (7.9 percent) during the third quarter of 1975. Unemployment rates were higher for both poverty and nonpoverty area residents within metropolitan areas than outside of metropolitan areas.

This report, "Labor Force Developments: Third Quarter 1975" provides an analysis of overall trends in the Nation's labor force--seasonally adjusted, except where specified--and includes data for some worker groups not published on a monthly basis.

The civilian labor force rose by 570,000 during the third quarter to 93.1 million. This group was about evenly divided between adult men and adult women; there was no change in the teenage labor force.

Because the labor force increased more than proportionally to the rising population, the overall rate of participation rose for the second straight quarter, returning to its alltime high of 61.4 percent.

The participation rate for adult women continued its secular uptrend to a new high of 46.2 percent. Participation among adult men edged up for the second quarter in a row but remained well below the rates of the late 1973 and early 1974. In contrast, the rate for teenagers was at its lowest point since the third quarter of 1973.

The employment-population ratio rose in the third quarter for the first time since the fourth quarter of 1973, as the number of persons employed increased by nearly 1 million over the quarter to 85.3 million. This followed a slight gain in the previous quarter. However, the employment level remained 1.1 million below the third quarter 1974 peak.

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VELMA STRODE, LABOR DEPARTMENT EEO DIRECTOR,
ELECTED TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF N.C. COLLEGE

WASHINGTON -- Velma M. Strode, director of equal employment opportunity for the Department of Labor, has been elected to the board of trustees of St. Augustine's College, Raleigh, N.C.

Mrs. Strode, who holds a B.A. degree in sociology from the predominantly black college, was awarded this year a plaque "for outstanding contribution to humanity" by St. Augustine's.

Dr. Prezell R. Robinson, St. Augustine's president, said Mrs. Strode's presence on the board of trustees "is going to bring a new level of vitality and resourcefulness."

The federal executive was unanimously elected to the board.

# # #

Week of October 27, 1975

LABOR DEPARTMENT TO INTERVENE
IN PENSION REFORM LAW CASE

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Labor Department has for the first time sought to enter a case under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

Solicitor of Labor William J. Kilberg announced that the Labor Department has moved to intervene in Harris V. Stryco Manufacturing Company, et al., in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California, San Francisco.

The case involves charges that fiduciary provisions of ERISA have been violated. Kilberg said that the Labor Department seeks to participate in the case to present the Department's position on important legal issues.

The Labor Department's involvement was brought about under a section of ERISA providing that the Secretary of Labor must be sent copies of the complaint in most private lawsuits under the law.

After receiving the Harris v. Stryco complaint, the Department reviewed the substantial documentation already filed in the case and decided to exercise its right to intervene under the act.

In papers filed on Oct. 14, 1975, the Department described the facts of the case as follows:

Stryco Manufacturing Company established a pension plan for its employees in 1966. Prior to enactment of ERISA, the plan loaned Stryco money and took promissory notes from Stryco for $130,000, payable between June 30, 1975 and Nov. 1, 1976. On May 15, 1975, the plan trustee agreed with Stryco to a renegotiation of the loan.

The plaintiff in the case, a participant in the pension plan and an ex-official of Stryco, claims that the May 15 loan renegotiation was a prohibited transaction under ERISA.

The Labor Department also asserts that the renegotiation of the loan was a prohibited transaction. The Department is asking that the court require the defendants to come forward with a program to restore the plan to its rightful economic position.

"This case," Kilberg said, "involves important legal issues of first impression. The Department has a strong interest in the outcome."

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Week of October 27, 1975

REVISED CPI WILL BE MOST COMPREHENSIVE,
ACCURATE INDEX OF ITS KIND, SHISKIN SAYS

DETROIT -- Commissioner of Labor Statistics Julius Shiskin told the Economic Club of Detroit that the revised U.S. Consumer Price Index--to be published in the spring of 1977--will be the most comprehensive and accurate index of its kind in the world.

Pointing to the many uses of the CPI, the U.S. Labor Department official said that the need for a highly accurate CPI index is apparent from the facts that it is watched closely as a measure of the success or failure of Government economic policy; that it is used to adjust other key indicators, such as wages and retail sales, for price changes; and that it is used as a basis for escalating the income payments to about half of the U.S. Population.

A one-percent increase in the CPI today triggers about a billion dollar increase in income payments, Shiskin added.

He cited some findings from the 1972-73 Consumer Expenditure Survey which will provide the expenditure weights to be used in the new CPI.

For example, with respect to purchases of automobiles, households headed by persons in the 25 to 35 year-old group, which make up 20 percent of U.S. families today, purchased about 30 percent of new imported cars, mostly inexpensive models. This group will increase to 25 percent of all families in 5 years.

On the other hand, households headed by persons 45 to 54 years old, a group declining in absolute as well as relative importance among families, spent 50 percent more on domestic new cars than did the younger group, and also spent more on larger, more expensive cars than any other age group.

Shiskin also described the BLS method of allowing for quality changes in reporting automobile prices. The quality adjustment question has been of growing importance because of Government regulations on safety and anti-pollution devices, and may be accentuated if reports are correct that many of the 1977 model cars will be scaled down to smaller wheelbases.

(MORE)

Shiskin said that the Bureau of Labor Statistics will publish two CPI indexes in 1977--one representing urban wage earners and clerical workers and another representing all urban households.

In addition to the national indexes, the BLS also will produce such indexes for 28 cities.

He reported that the BLS plans to carry out more frequent samplings of changes in consumer spending patterns in order to provide more current information for economic analysis and for updating the CPI in the future. Many changes in the ways the Bureau collects and analyzes data will make the revised index more accurate than the current index, Shiskin added.

# # #

INTERAGENCY VETERANS JOB PROGRAMS
PLACES 1.5 MILLION IN FISCAL YEAR 1975

WASHINGTON -- Almost 1.5 million Vietnam-era veterans were placed in jobs, training, or education through the programs of the Interagency Jobs for Veterans Advisory Committee during fiscal year 1975, Assistant Secretary of Labor William H. Kolberg announced.

Goals for such placements mostly exceeded those established last July by the Interagency Committee in a "plan of action" for Vietnam-era veterans' employment.

Kolberg, who serves as chairman of the veterans' interagency group, reported that in five out of eight major activities offering services to the veterans, "impressive results were achieved." He also noted that in the other three areas, accomplishments were as close to goals as could be expected.

"Overall," Secretary Kolberg said, "the combined placement goal was exceeded."

The detailed placement figures for the year that ended June 30 were: 391,000 in full-time private-sector jobs by public employment service offices, 155,964 in jobs through the efforts of the National Alliance of Businessmen, 95,092 in federal government jobs, 29,481 in U.S. Postal Service jobs, 29 blinded veterans in jobs through a special Labor Department contract with the Blinded Veterans' Association, 4,420 disabled veterans in jobs by the National Alliance of Businessmen; 72,226 in programs under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act and 719,218 in education and training under the GI Bill by the Veterans Administration.

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Week of October 27, 1975

BLACK LUNG BENEFITS BEING ADJUSTED

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Labor Department is adjusting compensation rates affecting federal employees injured or killed on the job, and black lung benefits for coal miners or their survivors, as a result of the recent federal employee pay increase.

Herbert A. Doyle Jr., director of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, said approximately 1,000 Federal Employees' Compensation Act cases will be subject to minimum and maximum rate adjustments effective on varying dates in October.

The minimum rate has been increased from $86.48 to $90.81 a week, and the maximum of $519.23 has been increased to $545.19 a week.

The increased benefit for coal miners and their survivors under the Black Lung Benefits Act is payable from Oct. 1, Doyle said. The Act ties in black lung benefits with the minimum pay level for federal employees.

The basic monthly benefit rate for disabled miners and survivors under the Act is increased from $187.40 to $196.80, and from $281.10 to $295.20 when there is one dependent. For two dependents the rate is increased from $328.00 to $344.40, and for three or more dependents, the benefits rise from $374.80 to $393.50.

# # #

Dear Consumer

Stickler on MPG? Read MPG Sticker.

By Virginia Knauer
Special Assistant to the President
and Director
Office of Consumer Affairs
Department of Health, Education and Welfare

If you are in the market for a new car, you will probably take into account such factors as price, size and driveability when studying the different makes and models.

But with the rising cost of gasoline still a major consideration, you should also think about another important factor in car selection: fuel efficiency—or the number of miles per gallon of gas the car will get on the road.

To help you determine the fuel economy of 1976 cars, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), along with the Federal Energy Administration (FEA), has developed a labeling program that provides miles-per-gallon information about most of the new model cars.

The program is voluntary, but under it, most American and foreign auto manufacturers are putting stickers on their new cars and light-duty trucks, giving estimates of how many miles each can be driven on a gallon of gas.

The EPA-FEA program gives manufacturers the choice of what kind of labels to use on their cars, but basically, you will see two different types:

1. Miles-per-gallon figures for test vehicles that are within the same car line-engine size group. A car line-engine size group consists of cars that have the same engine size, carburetor, transmission, emission control system. This label will probably be the most common one used because it corresponds to the EPA-FEA mileage guide booklet for new car buyers.

2. Miles-per-gallon figure for a specific car. If manufacturers choose to use this label, they must also provide information on the car's engine size, weight, number of cylinders in the engine, number of barrels in the carburetor, type of transmission, rear axle ratio and the type of emission control system.

Miles-per-gallon figures that appear on the labels are derived from EPA tests. Cars are placed on a platform (dynamometer) and are driven on two pre-set driving cycles—one simulating city driving and the other simulating highway driving. EPA then uses the emissions collected during the two cycles to calculate fuel economy figures.

EPA's figures, however, are only estimates of the mileage you can get with the new model cars. The fuel economy that is achieved by any car varies with the kind of driving you do, what optional equipment you have installed, how well you maintain the car and such other factors as weather and road conditions.

For more information about the fuel economy of the 1976 cars, EPA and FEA have published **Gas Mileage Guide for New Car Buyers**, which you can order free by writing to Fuel Economy, Pueblo, CO. 81009.

Week of October 27, 1975

FILLERS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The number of employees who worked more than the "standard" 40-hour workweek and the number who received premium pay for hours exceeding the standard were substantially lower in May 1975 than a year earlier, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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In all, about 14.1 million wage and salary employees worked 41 hours a week or more in May 1975, down 2 million from a year earlier, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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In May 1975, 5.0 million employees in the goods-producing industries and 9.2 million in the service-producing industries worked 41 hours or more a week, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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In the automobile industry, employees on workweeks of 41 hours or more declined by about 320,000, or 70 percent, between May 1973 and May 1975, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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Small increases in the number of employees who worked extended weeks were reported between 1973 and 1975 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in health services, with the exception of hospitals and mining.

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